

REMARKS

Please note that the attorney docket number for this application is 78104077/N15411, and we would appreciate if this docket number could be reflected on any future communications.

Claim 93 is canceled, new claims 104-110 are added, and claims 94, 95, and 103 are amended. No claims fee is believed due because the number of present claims, consisting of a total of 28 claims with 4 independent claims, was already paid for in the Preliminary Amendment of 26 November 2001 (which included 28 total claims with 4 independent claims). No new matter has been added by the amendments or new claims. To briefly review the amendments:

- Claim 94 is amended to incorporate objected claim 98;
- Claims 95 and 103 are amended to enhance their clarity in view of the amendment to their parent claim 94;
- Independent claim 104 and its dependent claims 105-106 find support in Figs. 3a-3b and page 13 lines 13-25, as well as in original claims 65 and 93-94;
- Independent claim 107 and its dependent claims 108-110 find support in Figs. 3a-3b and page 13 lines 13-25, as well as in original claims 65, 93-94, 100, and 102.

Of these claims, claims 65-76 have been allowed, and claims 93-103 have been indicated as allowable if objected claim 98 was incorporated into claim 94, which has been done. *Thus, all of claims 65-76, 93-97, and 99-103 should be allowable.*

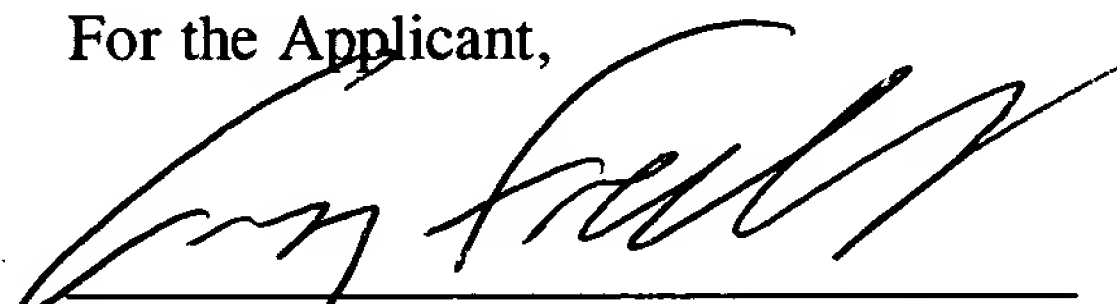
Regarding new claims 104-106, these are submitted to be allowable over U.S. Patent 5,722,709 to *Lortz* because, for example, claim 104 recites that the engagement region of the female member is formed of shape memory material. In contrast, *Lortz* uses a “retainer ring” 16 of shape memory material (FIG. 1 and column 3 lines 25-37), with “segments” 14 (FIGS. 1-2 and column 3 lines 1-24) within the retainer ring and a heater 20 (FIG. 1 and column 4 lines 9-11) outside the retainer ring. The segments 14 are not formed of shape memory material, nor would it be obvious to form them of shape memory material: if they were formed of shape memory material, they would expand radially inwardly as well as outwardly, and thereby would not release the male member 17 (which is also why the segments 14 are quartered).

As for RU 2011045 to *Popov*, here *both* the male and female element are made of shape memory material, and are formed, assembled, and disassembled at an operating temperature. If a temperature change occurred in *Popov* (i.e., if the *Popov* members were heated), both the male and female members would expand, thereby tightly locking them together. This does not amount to the claimed arrangement, nor is it in any way apparent how this arrangement would (either by itself or with *Lortz* or other references) suggest the claimed arrangement.

Regarding new claims 107-110, claim 110 is submitted to be allowable over U.S. Patent 5,722,709 to *Lortz* because, for example, claim 104 recites that the engagement region of the male member is formed of shape memory material. *Lortz* has no such structure, and certainly does not suggest it since it is unclear how such a male member could be successfully heated to change its shape by use of the *Lortz* arrangement. Regarding RU 2011045 to *Popov*, the comments above apply here as well.

If any questions regarding the application arise, please contact the undersigned attorney. Telephone calls related to this application are welcomed and encouraged. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayments relating to this application to deposit account number 18-2055.

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